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Public Comments on 2015-2017 Enterprise Housing Goals:=====

Title: 2015-2017 Enterprise Housing Goals

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Comment: October 21, 2014

Mr. Alfred M. Pollard, General Counsel

Federal Housing Finance Agency

400 Seventh Street, SW., Eighth Floor,

Washington, DC 20024

Attention: Comments/RIN 2590-AA65

RE: RIN 2590-AA65 2015-2017 Enterprise Housing Goals

General Counsel Pollard:

I am writing on behalf of Long Island Housing Services, Inc. (LIHS), the private, non-profit Fair Housing advocacy and enforcement agency serving since 1969. Our mission is the elimination of unlawful housing discrimination and promotion of decent and affordable housing. As a HUD-approved Housing Counseling agency and a HUD qualified Fair Housing Enforcement organization, our work includes issues pertaining to rentals, sales, insurance and mortgages. In addition, we are also a member of the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC).

Under the NYS Attorney Generals Homeownership Protection Program, LIHS has been providing counseling and free legal services to prevent foreclosure. Some of the communities in our service area are identified as hardest hit- both statewide and nationwide, the correlation of racial and ethnic segregation and vulnerability of first-time buyers that were targeted for predatory loans is undeniable. As the demographics of the United States continue to shift toward lower-income households and a more racially and ethnically diverse population, eliminating barriers to homeownership, stimulating mortgage choice, and generating

opportunities in the conventional mortgage market are critical issues for these communities, the housing industry, and the well-being of the nations economy overall.

While our organization commends the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) for recognizing that the Enterprises must lead the market in purchase and refinance opportunities for these consumers, the proposed 2015-2017 Housing Goals fail to take the right steps to ensure that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac will do their part to eliminate access barriers and liquidity challenges for loans made to our communities. The FHFA, through its policies and rulemakings, simply cannot continue to ignore the fact that, in the future, low- and moderate-income borrowers and people of color will no longer be a niche market, but likely the mortgage industrys core consumers. Therefore, we urge the FHFA to address the concerns raised in the National Community Reinvestment Coalitions comment letter and adopt NCRCs recommendations in the final rule.

Specifically, NCRCs comment letter identifies concerns and offers recommendations regarding the following areas:

- (1) The legal validity of FHFAs three alternately proposed evaluation methods,
- (2) the Agencys estimated size of the low- and moderate- income (LMI) mortgage market and market for communities of color,
- (3) the absence of demographic considerations in the financial model used to calculate FHFAs market projections for LMI and communities of color; and
- (4) the Agencys conclusion that the included data in the existing financial model supports the conclusion that the LMI borrowers and borrowers choosing to live in communities of color will significantly decline over the next three years.

We believe that the final 2015-2017 Enterprises Housing Goals rule can only be strengthened by addressing NCRCs concerns and adopting the coalitions recommendations.

Between 2003-2012, the affordable housing goals have helped 1,088,987 households in New York become homeowners or benefit from affordable rental housing, 36% of these are low and moderate income. As a result, families were able to realize real economic gains from their housing options and build savings. We firmly believe that the affordable housing goals are far too important to preserving and building the wealth of working-class people to allow regulatory policies to marginalize or minimize their effect.

We would like to thank FHFA for this opportunity to share our views on the proposed rule. If you have any questions or would like additional information regarding this comment, please do not hesitate to contact me at (631) 567-511, ext. 316 or by email: Michelle@LIFairHousing.org.

Sincerely,

Michelle Santantonio, Executive Director
Long Island Housing Services, Inc.
640 Johnson Avenue, Suite 8
Bohemia, NY 11716

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